and it is important not to confuse the ideal of the intel- 121
lectual nationalists, a free Kurdish commonwealth, with that 669
which the chieftains and their people are now striving to preserve, a society quite unlike the state.

The Kurds, occupying a mountainous terrain, were but 648
superficially governed by the Iranian and Ottoman governments. Inasmuch as the roads were poor or the country [491]
impossible for artillery, the Kurds, a well-armed people, were usually the military equals of their governors. The control of the Iranians and Turks was thus largely confined to the maintenance of police posts and army installations and the attempt, often in vain, to maintain public order and collect a few taxes. Helmut von Moltke, writing in 1838, notes:

> It is a well-known fact that the Ottoman empire comprises vast regions in which the Porte exercises no real authority. It is certain that the Padishah (the Turkish Sultan) has to reconquer widespread regions within the territory of his own state. To this category belong the highlands (of Kurdistan) between the Tigris and the Persian frontier.[1]

In recent decades, however, the Kurds, notably in Iraq and 117
Turkey, have been subjected to the full impact of the modern 619
state and some remarkable changes, comparable to similar developments elsewhere in the Middle East, are beginning to take place, challenging the whole structure of their society. This last, as will be seen, is one which is at once tribal and feudal, formerly directed by a landed aristocracy. A

---

[1]Quoted in Safrastian, 1948, p. 30.

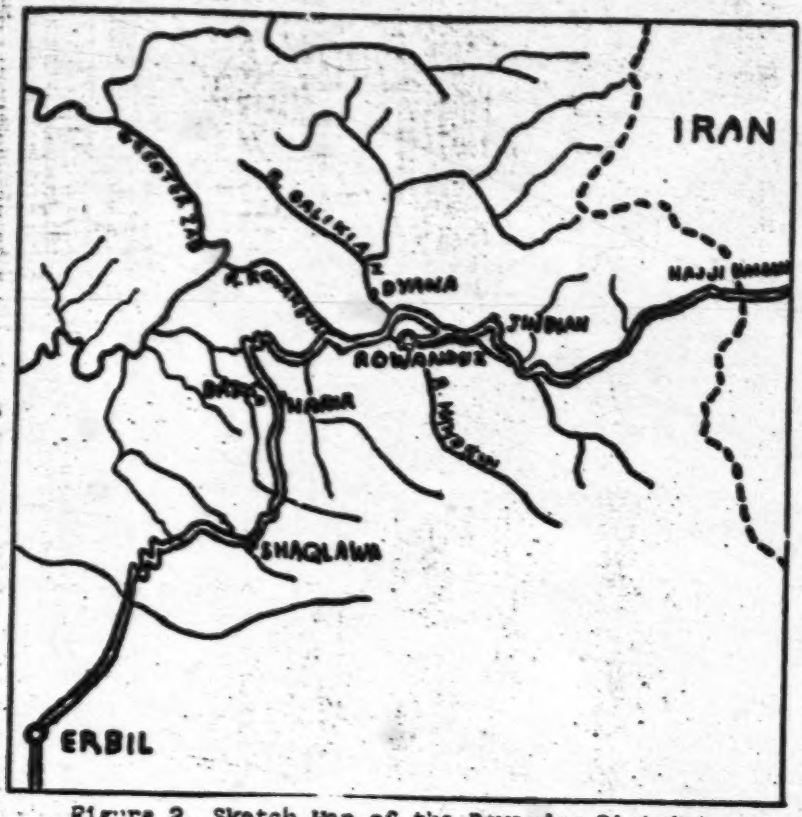
and highland meadows. Water is abundant and swift perennial streams from icy springs cut the landscape. Many of the mountains are capped with snow throughout the year, and the plains around Sulaymaniya constitute one of the most verdant areas in Iraq. The region has suffered extensive deforestation, but poplar and willow abound along the watercourses and a few stands of heavier timber, such as oak, may yet be found in the uplands. The rivers and streams offer fish, and bear, ibex, snow leopards, and wolves are still to be encountered on the mountainsides. Save at the highest elevations, the area is blasted by the sun in summer, scorching the vegetation, but to a lesser extent than in the plains to the south. With the winter season of rain and snow, many of the passes are blocked for several months. The temperatures in either summer or winter, however, are not extreme. In spring the meadows are filled with brightly-colored flowers, particularly the poppy, but their life is short before the onset of the summer heat.

The Kurdish town of Rowanduz is to be found in the mountains fifty miles northeast of Erbil. In older days Rowanduz was directly on the trade route between Erbil and Iran, but the recent construction of an automobile highway by the British has removed it from the main stream of what remains of this traffic.[1] The exact antiquity of the town is uncertain, but it first achieved prominence as the headquarters of Kor Pasha, a chieftain who gained temporary

[1]Recounted in Hamilton, 1937.

the merchants of the town, and gardens. The Turkish serai and the main body of the town were to be found in the valley, close to the river. The bluff commands a magnificent view of the surrounding countryside, the peak of Sari Hasan Beg rising 8405 feet above sea level to the northeast, that of Handrin Dagh 8600 feet to the southeast, and the cliffs of Kurrek Dagh to 7500 feet to the west. During the first World War, however, a Russian army entered the valley and destroyed the town, slaughtering those inhabitants who remained behind, as well as the Turkish wounded who had been sheltered in a mosque. Most of the populace fled to Erbil, and only several hundred families of the original population returned after the end of the war.

The town was gradually rebuilt during the decade which followed the first World War, not in the valley, but on the bluff formerly called Qala Tiluk which is a formidable defensive position against infantry, for the gorges of the Rowanduz and Handria rivers protect it on three sides. This is the new Rowanduz, and the site of the older is occupied only by an army barracks constructed by the British and a small aggregation of buildings known as Kawlokan. A description of the new town will be found in the study to follow. Rowanduz is joined to the modern automobile highway by a road which follows the Rowanduz river east to a point named Jindian where a steel bridge crosses the high rocky banks of the river. The town is on the old caravan



102
133
491
131

Figure 2. Sketch Map of the Rowanduz District

a great number of animals, thus partially explaining the seemingly small figure for "nomads" cited above. 233 [162]

In spring the kotchir are on the move, leading their flocks of sheep and goats from winter pasturage around Mosul and Erbil to summer grazing in the hills and mountains. The passes and defiles are filled with their animals, an annoying impasse to swift communication, and their black tents line the watercourses and trails. As winter approaches they return once again from the uplands, seeking the warmth of the Jazira plain. In former days their passage could often be turbulent. Because of his flocks, the kotchir must get through, and was accustomed to fight a way if none peaceful could be found. Much of this has lately been changed, for police vehicles with automatic weapons are strong arguments against violence, and the construction of better roads has greatly facilitated movement, although the nomad still has the right of way after dark, and moving a vehicle through the sea of animals blinking in the headlights is difficult. Even then the kotchir constitute one of the most difficult administrative problems of a qaimmaqam, such as that of Rowanduz. He must arbitrate their quarrels in passage (usually a sheep missing from the nomad, or transient flocks in a villager's field) as well as those they cannot settle among themselves. Lastly, as many cross the national border into Iranian Azerbaijan, the qaimmaqam of Rowanduz must arrange their transfer twice each year with the authorities of that country.

221 233 [625] [491] [693] [648]

distinction for robbery and bloodshed, and certainly a part of the usual income of the old chieftains was derived from the exaction of "tolla" or outright kidnapping, either of persons or of goods, just as revenge in a blood feud was one of their outstanding duties. The introduction of better roads and the adoption of modern equipment by police and army have, without question, lessened greatly the frequency of these things, and the contemporary brigand --they still occur--finds himself heavily outgunned. In spite of this unsavory reputation, particularly for revolt, the Kurdish minority of Iraq cannot be said to be the most lawless in the country, for the Muntafiq liwa, a "Marsh Arab" province, is frequently cited as the worst. Although the army may be called upon in exceptional cases, normally the prevention and detection of crime is the work of the police, and their direction within the qadha is charged to the qaimmaqam.

181 579 [628] [177] [491] [625] [704] 625 647 624

Service with the police is quite popular among the poorest classes, particularly among those of the "Marsh Arab" provinces, because, although the pay is extremely small, it is accepted as a substitute for military service and, as a career, offers an escape from agricultural drudgery. Officers are attracted to serve just as they might be to the army or the civil service, and are commissioned after graduation from a special school. They are usually derived from poorer middle-class families and have had a secondary education. There is thus quite a social gap between an officer

625

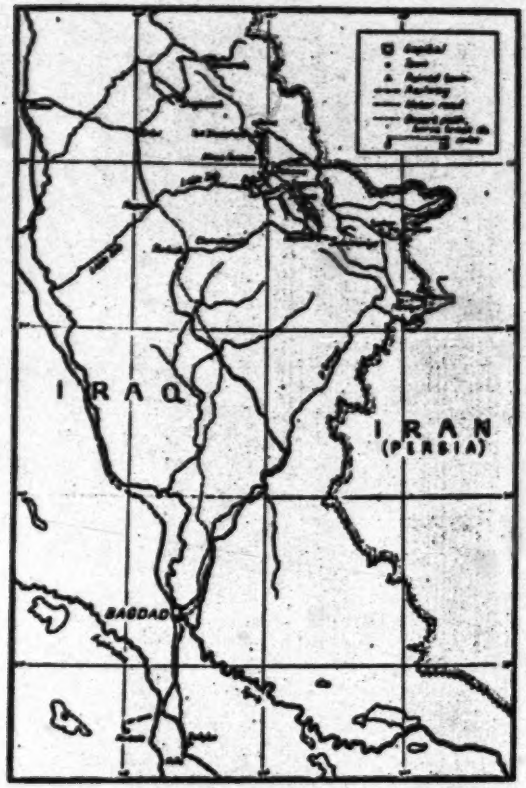
or religious. In Ottoman times, while it was an administrative center under Turkish rule, Rowanduz had considerable importance because it lay astride the trade route between Iran and Erbil, and from Erbil the Jazira plain and Syria, and a great volume of caravan trade passed through its gates. Today the automobile road constructed by British engineers bypasses the town and commerce following the old direction need have no reference to the town itself. With an obvious political background, the British mandate in Iraq and the withdrawal of Bolshevik Russia from Middle Eastern affairs, much of this same trade has dwindled. Prior to the first World War, a great part of the manufactured goods, like those of the general merchant listed above and merchandised in Iranian Azerbaijan and northern Iraq, came from Russia, porcelain, glassware, metalware, cloth, samovars, kerosene, and the like, some of the more precious items still preserved in Rowanduz households as family heirlooms. With the British domination of the markets of Iraq, the focus of trade for this area has shifted almost completely from the north to the south. One never sees an item manufactured in the Soviet Union in the bazar of Rowanduz. It may be supposed that the Turks selected Rowanduz as a seat of government because of this importance in trade, and the administrative demotion of the town under Erbil, where formerly the two were equals, can be taken as a reflection of commercial decline.

It has been seen that the only important produce of

[i.e., the town of Rowanduz.—Analyst]

4: Hansen E-5 (1957) 1961 MA11 Kurd MA11

102
103
131
133
491
496



Lokal map of the area visited. The area is covered by R. A. F.'s aeronautical maps Nos. 340, 427 and 428.

Thus during my approx. four months stay in Iraqi Kurdistan I did not, as planned, stay among Europeans at the Danish Dokan Expedition's camp with daily, but isolated visits to Kurdish villages, but lived almost uninterruptedly in Kurdish homes. This greatly facilitated the work of the woman interpreter, who would hardly have secured her family's permission to live permanently in an European excavation camp among foreign men even though another woman was present. In addition to the opportunity to follow the life of the village, I also had the chance to study life in an urban environment. In addition, my interpreter, besides being of invaluable assistance in my work of investigating the lives

114
121
115